

URPETH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Urpeth Parish Council held on Tuesday 21 July 2026 at Edenfield Communal Room, West Pelton at 6.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors H Fox, G Holmes-Wood, K Norwood, P Pringle, R Johnson, B Scott, I Stewart-Fergusson and D Wood.

24. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Barrett Cllr S Hann, C Todd and County Councillor Quirey

25. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

26. Representations from the Public

Residents of Trinity Green estate were in attendance in relation to Item 7.

The Clerk informed Members that correspondence concerning the County Durham Plan Call for Sites had been received from residents of Urpeth Grange ahead of the meeting and would be discussed under Item 9.

27. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

28. Update from Beamish Museum

Members were advised that Julie Wilson was unable to attend the meeting however would be in attendance at the September meeting to provide an update.

Councillor Scott reported concerns regarding fires being lit within woodland areas close to the museum site. It was noted that the current dry conditions increased the risk of fire and residents were encouraged to report incidents immediately to the appropriate authorities.

29. County Councillor Report

The Clerk reported that County Councillor Quirey was unable to attend and had submitted his apologies however had advised that he would be in attendance at the next meeting.

The Clerk advised that County Councillor Quirey had indicated that support could be provided for funding of potential improvements to Eden Place Car Park and agreed to discuss the matter further at the next meeting.

Resolved: That the update be noted and the matter be considered further at the September meeting.

30. Update on Matters Relating to Trinity Green

Members received an update following discussions at Pelton Parish Council and information received from Durham County Council Planning.

Residents at that meeting had raised concerns regarding the Trinity Green development, including:

- The incomplete connection to the C2C footpath near the cemetery.
- Young people entering the culvert and constructing a BMX track.
- Large groups congregating within the area, resulting in anti-social behaviour and several altercations.
- Reports of individuals being verbally aggressive towards residents.
- Concerns that issues had escalated since the commencement of the school holidays.

Members discussed the importance of reporting incidents to Durham Constabulary and engaging with the Neighbourhood Warden Service. Residents were encouraged to maintain records of incidents and provide dates, photographs and other evidence where appropriate.

Members also expressed concerns regarding:

- Outstanding planning matters.
- Delays to footpath and access works required under the planning permission.
- Drainage issues.
- Incomplete landscaping works.

It was suggested that a site meeting be arranged involving representatives of Miller Homes, residents and the Parish Council to review the outstanding issues.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council contact Miller Homes seeking an update on outstanding works and requesting a site meeting with residents and Parish Council representatives.

31. Civility and Respect Pledge

Members considered the Civility and Respect Pledge promoted by the National Association of Local Councils and Durham County Council's Standards Committee.

Members discussed the commitment to promoting respectful conduct, maintaining high standards of governance and supporting appropriate training for councillors and staff.

Resolved: That Urpeth Parish Council sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.

32. Correspondence and Clerk's Report

a) County Durham Plan Scoping Consultation

Members considered correspondence relating to the County Durham Plan Scoping Consultation.

The Clerk reported that two representations had been received from residents objecting to the site identified to the rear of Bellerby Drive.

Members expressed concerns regarding development on Green Belt land and the potential loss of separation between settlements. Concerns were also raised regarding infrastructure, access and local funding implications which impacted the wider parish area

Members suggested that information be published on the Parish Council website, together with a map of the affected area, to encourage wider public participation in the consultation.

A request was received for Parish Council support with the printing and distribution of a letter prepared by a resident. Members agreed that, as the letter had not been formally endorsed by the Parish Council, it could not be issued as a Parish Council communication. Members also noted that the letter related to a limited number of properties, whereas the Call for Sites process had potential implications for the wider Urpeth area. It was agreed that options for further communications to all Urpeth residents would be considered following the August recess.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council submit an objection to the proposal and upload relevant information to the Council's website.

b) South Moor U12 Football Team Fundraising Request

Members considered a request for assistance with a sponsored litter pick organised by South Moor U12 Football Team.

It was noted that the Parish Council held approximately 20 litter-picking equipment sets which could potentially be made available. Members further discussed supervision and health and safety considerations.

Resolved: That further discussions take place with the organisers outside the meeting to establish what support is required.

c) Section 106 Funding Application

Members considered correspondence relating to Pelton Parish Council's Section 106 funding application seeking £20,000 towards three bespoke artworks behind the Pelton Memorial.

Resolved: That no objections be submitted.

d) Defibrillator Installation - West Pelton

Members were advised that BT had completed the decommissioning of the telephone kiosk and that installation of the defibrillator was awaited.

Members discussed attendance at an informal opening event to promote the jointly funded equipment.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

35. Finance Matters

Resolved: That the following amounts be approved for payment:

Clerk	1013.52
HMRC Paye 4 x 2 employees	301.38
Street Cleansing Operative	588.30
Street Cleansing Operative	727.02
DH1 Travel	160.00

36. Allotments

Members considered the potential purchase and installation of CCTV cameras at the allotments and the Clerk provided information around implications for data protection requirements and council policies.

Alternative wildlife cameras were also considered together with the need for appropriate signage and communication with plot holders.

Resolved: That the Clerk explore implications regarding policy, data protection and legal requirements and report outlining options would be brought back to a future meeting.

37. Ward and Area Matters

a) Litter Picking and Fly-Tipping

Members discussed litter-picking activity throughout the parish and Councillor Stewart-Fergusson raised concerns regarding fly-tipping at two particular locations, and difficulties associated with access due to damaged gates.

Members emphasised the need to recover and reissue Parish Council litter-picking equipment and promote its availability to residents. Promotion of litter-picking opportunities was also discussed.

b) Flower Beds and Grounds Maintenance

Members raised concerns regarding standards of flower bed maintenance under the Grounds Maintenance Contract and highlighted further issues which included ongoing grass-cutting concerns and overhanging trees requiring attention.

Resolved: That the concerns be raised with Durham County Council.

c) Anti-Social Behaviour and Off-Road Bikes

Members received an update regarding ongoing activity by Durham Constabulary and Councillor Fox provide an updated following her meeting with Luke Akehurst MP.

It was reported that a number of initiatives had been undertaken and several off-road bikes had been confiscated.

d) West Pelton - Planning Enforcement

Members noted correspondence received from Planning Enforcement in relation to the Change of Use of a property at West Pelton noting that no planning breach had been identified, and the enforcement case had subsequently been closed.

e) Council Tax Billing Error

Members received an update regarding a council tax billing error reported to Durham County Council.

f) Parking Enforcement

Members discussed parking concerns at Ill Cancelllo and on Karbon Homes land, together with issues affecting Urpeth Grange.